

Michael F. Easley  
Governor



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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For Release: **IMMEDIATE**  
Date: May 4, 2007

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**GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES NATIONAL PRAISE FOR *LEARN AND EARN* HIGH SCHOOL**  
***Stanly Learn and Earn Early College High School Honored by National School Boards Association***

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley announced today that one of the North Carolina’s *Learn and Earn* high schools has won one of the nation’s most prestigious education innovation awards. Stanly County Schools received the Magna Award from the National School Boards Association for its work to open college opportunity to students who otherwise might have dropped out of school, through the *Stanly Learn and Earn Early College High School*.

“Stanly Early College is a shining example of how North Carolina is helping students stay in high school and go to college ready to take on the opportunities the global economy offers,” Easley said. “I congratulate the students, the leadership of Stanly County Schools, Stanly Community College, and the local businesses that have helped make the school a success.”

*Learn and Earn* schools provide students with an opportunity to graduate in four or five years with a high school diploma and either an associate’s degree or two years of college credit. There are currently 33 *Learn and Earn* schools around the state. In his budget, Easley has called on the state legislature to open 22 new schools this fall and another 20 in fall 2008. Most schools are located on the campuses of community colleges or universities.

“We are very excited to receive this honor,” Stanly Early College Principal John Balls said. “We feel it is a strong recognition not only of the work that our school and community have done, but also of the work that all early college *Learn and Earn* high schools across North Carolina are doing.”

The Magna Awards single out for distinguished recognition innovative programs that are actively supported by local school boards that advance student learning. The Stanly school was recognized both for the strong partnerships that the school has developed between the school district, community college and local business leaders, and, more importantly, for its work at “giving students who might never get to college an extra shot at higher education.”

Easley’s efforts to reform North Carolina high schools and confront the problem of high school dropouts are scheduled to be highlighted next Wednesday in Washington at the “National Summit To End America’s Silent Dropout Epidemic.” He is one of three governors who are set to speak to the summit on a panel moderated by Pulitzer Prize winning Washington Post columnist David Broder.

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